HIGHLIGHT

SOCIAL PROTECTION & JOBS POLICY & TECHNICAL NOTE

Fishery stocks are declining all over the world, threatening not only the livelihoods of fisheries households and communities, but also food and nutrition security of a broader society. However, many countries face challenges in reforming fisheries policies and implement fisheriesmanagement measures which tend to incur socioeconomic costs to fisheries actors in the short to medium term. Given its mission in managing risks – protecting people from poverty and shocks as well as promoting better opportunities – Social Protection and Jobs (SPJ) measures can play a greater role in facilitating these difficult reforms and regulations in the fisheries sector for a sustainable future for people, fish, and food and nutrition security. This note provides an overview of five inspiring countries – Costa Rica, Kenya, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam where inter-sectoral efforts are underway to integrate SPJ with fisheries for a more integrated approach.

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Integrating Social
Protection with Fisheries
Management for
Sutainability: Overview of
Country Case Studies

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1. Introduction

The global increase in fishing effort over the last few decades is harming the productivity of fish stocks and fisheries, threatening not only households and communities who depend on fisheries for their livelihoods², but also wider food and nutrition security. Fish is an important source of nutrition for many, providing 3.3 billion people worldwide with at least 20 percent of their average animal-protein intake³, yet fishing has expanded to the point that it is also the main driver of change in marine ecosystems (IPBES 2019). More than one third of marine fishery stocks assessed are "overfished" that is, fished at biologically unsustainable levels with another 57 percent fished at the maximum level of biological sustainability (FAO 2022).

Climate change is increasing risks to fisheries, challenging the ability of fishing communities manage them sustainably. **Fisheries** households and communities are vulnerable to shocks and stresses, and are experiencing increasing, multiple, and concomitant risks. These include risks linked to overfishing and climate change that further drive pressure on fishing and potentially more overfishing. In a vicious cycle, this exacerbates the declines in fisheries' productivity (the replenishment of fishery stocks). Unless fishing communities are supported to better manage their fisheries, fisheries workers can be pressured into this vicious cycle to meet their daily needs, putting the future of the sector at risk, along with the nutrition and livelihoods it provides to the society.

Policies for managing risks and promoting sustainability in fisheries are limited and, where they exist and are implemented, they often impose substantial and what can be considered unfair costs on fisheries workers and communities. Currently. investment to promote sustainable fisheries is limited. Government spending on fisheries often favor short-term profit over long-term benefits; it has been estimated that about two-thirds of global marine fisheries subsidies are allocated to activities that promote overexploitation, and that those activities would be unprofitable without the subsidies (Sumaila et al. 2019). Furthermore, despite the long-term benefits that policy reforms for sustainable production create, fisheries workers and their communities often bear substantial social and/or economic costs, at least in the short to medium term. This makes it difficult to reach political consensus on reforms, and it remains difficult to implement them even once consensus has been established.

Including those commercially employed in both small- and large-scale fisheries, subsistence workers in small-scale fisheries, and their dependents, it is estimated that approximately 515 million livelihoods depend at least partially on fisheries, of whom 491 million on small-scale fisheries. (FAO, Duke University and WorldFish. 2023)

⁵⁰ percent or more in some low-income countries and SIDS (FAO 2022).

Social Protection and Jobs (SPJ) programs elements could facilitate fisheries policy reform and associated fisheriesmanagement measures. In addition to reducing overall vulnerability and protecting households during shocks, thereby preventing them from falling into (deeper) poverty, SPJ can enable and incentivize certain behavior changes that support fisheries sustainability. For example, social-protection interventions—such as transfers and public works—can mitigate some negative short- to medium-term repercussions of forgone income that communities experience as a result of compliance with fishing regulations such as closed seasons or minimum sizes of landed fish. In addition, livelihoods support can enable fisheries workers to reduce their income dependence on the fisheries sector in situations where it is necessary to reduce the total numbers of people dependent on these resources.

While there are opportunities, there are also challenges in adapting social protection to the fisheries context. SPJ coverage is generally limited, leaving half of the global population outside of any risk-management mechanisms. Limited SPJ coverage also applies to the small-scale-fisheries sector,4 where workers are often poor, vulnerable, and work under informal arrangements. National and mainstream SPJ policies and programs typically target broader populations and are not designed

to address the specific needs of any one sector, including fisheries. Similarly, fisheries-management measures typically do not deliberately incorporate SPJ measures or any other risk-management mechanisms. While there are some good practices of providing compensation mechanisms alongside fisheries regulations, the number of such examples is limited.

World Bank Efforts for "Blue Social Protection and Jobs" to Support Client Countries

"Blue Social Protection and Jobs (SPJ)" outlines concrete pathways for strengthening the connections between fisheries and SPJ. The aim is to enhance the understanding of how SPJ policies, systems, programs, and mechanisms can support fisheries workers and their communities to prevent or reduce overexploitation and enhance the sustainability of fisheries and livelihoods.

This work started with a rapid review of **international best practices.** First, a literature review was conducted to take stock of global practices around SPJ interventions in the fisheries sector. Subsequently, the development of a broad conceptual framework (Bladon et al 2022) identified several pathways for how SPJ can be better and further leveraged to support fisheries-management objectives. This activity highlighted that various

Fisheries workers include all men and women employed formally or informally (whether full- or part-time, and including for subsistence) along the fisheries value chain, including in pre-harvest, harvest, and post-harvest activities. Fishers are those harvesting, whereas fish workers are involved in other parts of the value chain.

instruments—such as cash transfers, public works, economic inclusion, and social insurance can reduce the short- to medium-term costs of transitioning to more sustainable fisheries practices, thereby incentivizing behavior change. Where total numbers of fishers or their level of fishing activity need to be more permanently reduced, economic inclusion and active labor-market programs can play a critical role in facilitating fisheries workers' partly or wholly transitioning to other sectors, while pension schemes can facilitate their early retirement.

To illustrate this conceptual framework, the World Bank team conducted in-depth case studies in five countries. In 2022, the World Bank team identified Costa Rica, Kenya, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam for case studies, based on the World Bank portfolio and engagement to support government fisheriesmanagement efforts, integrating accompanying measures related to social assistance and livelihood support. Based on the various activities and analyses carried out from mid-2022, Country Notes have been prepared to distill main findings for practitioners working in or with these government administrations, particularly with ministries in charge of fisheries, social affairs, and labor.

This Note provides an overview of the five country case studies. The case studies share some similarities but also have differences in terms

of their scope and focus. Section 2 introduces the key questions that have guided the case studies across countries. Section 3 offers a brief overview of the five case studies, given that each country has specific contexts and somewhat different approaches and methods. This Section also serves as a compass to practitioners as to which case study is most relevant to their needs. Lastly, drawing on these case studies, Section 4 provides some key concluding takeaways, while Section 5 looks forward to next steps for advancing the fisheries and SPJ agenda.

2. Key Questions to **Address Unknowns**

How can fisheries management and SPJ jointly realize sustainability objectives: that is, to effectively manage the exploitation of fish resources while sustaining/improving livelihoods of fisheries-dependent the populations? To facilitate such an inter-sectoral, frontier, complex dialogue, information in a number of key areas needs to be obtained. While acknowledging data limitations, the following provides an overview of the key questions that need to be asked to address existing knowledge gaps. The questions can be classified into three broad categories—policies, data/information, and programs— which guided the design of the case studies across the five countries.

Question 1. What is the policy and institutional context?

Typically, fisheries management and SPJ fall under the jurisdiction of different ministries with distinct mandates. As a result. coordination between these two sectors and their associated institutions does not necessarily occur automatically, including for development and implementation of integrated fisheries management and SPJ programs. Understanding the policy context and key objectives in both the fisheries and SPJ sectors, along with the governance framework and political economy, provides important background and a starting point for connecting the two sectors and ministries. Therefore, all case studies start with a brief description of such broader sectorial contexts in each country. In addition, where the information is available, the country context was explained using key standard statistics, such as on SPJ spending and coverage, and fisheries subsidies.

Question 2. What is the socioeconomic and demographic profile of fisheries workers and their communities. And what are the main social-ecological risks they face?

The productivity of fisheries as well as the profiles of people who depend on them

and related issues vary between and within countries, meaning that different strategies need to be customized for each context. Also. the profile of fisheries workers is not uniform; for instance, not all of the people involved in small-scale fisheries and informal workers in large-scale fisheries are poor. People dependent on fishing have different needs and face different types and levels of risks⁵ depending on their characteristics and fisheries-related activities - for example: boat owners/skippers versus crew, fishing under open access⁶ versus with permits/licenses, fishing for sale versus for own consumption, fishers versus those involved in other parts of the value chain, and geographic location. How their activities affect fishery resources vary significantly in terms of negative environmental impact or harm to fish-stock productivity.

The case studies use both quantitative and qualitative information. To better understand the profile and socioeconomic characteristics and vulnerabilities of fisheries actors, the case studies use various sources of data. This analysis—unique in terms of having a specific focus on the fisheries and SPJ intersection—acknowledges the limitations of the data and its statistical significance, depending on the sampling framework.

Risk is defined as a function of hazard, exposure, and vulnerability. Vulnerability, in turn, is a function of sensitivity minus adaptation capacity, whereby sensitivity indicates the intrinsic degree to which an entity or community depends on something – fisheries in this instance.

When there are no measures to limit the numbers of fishers or vessels that enter a fishery, then the fishery is referred to as an open-access fishery.

Question 3. What are the relevant existing systems and programs—both in fisheries and SPJ sectors—that can be leveraged?

While there are some good examples of adapting SPJ programs, generally they do not deliberately integrate objectives of fisheries management, and vice versa. However, in many countries, both sectors have systems or programs that can serve as an important basis to start a dialogue - although the level and scope of these systems and programs can vary significantly by country. Some forms of fisheries-management measures are usually in place, which ideally are based on assessments of fish stocks and their productivity, supported by monitoring and enforcement. For the SPJ side, some countries have fairly established national, mainstream SPJ programs, such as cash transfers. However, some countries only have SPJ or risk-management **mechanisms** integrated into other programs—such as community or rural-development programs, disaster response, payment for ecosystem services—or informal or semi-informal mechanisms, such as those provided by cooperatives, NGOs, or relatives.

To identify which systems/programs to best adapt to fisheries actors or communities, the case studies review countries' fisheries and SPJ sectors and map existing programs and mechanisms. Document reviews and

key-informant interviews with government officials served as the primary approach for such reviews. Where possible, quantitative analysis complemented this to assess the level of access and coverage of relevant programs. All five country case studies uncovered inspiring cases of how SPJ and fisheries-management programs can work synergistically to reduce vulnerabilities in fishing communities and improve conservation and sustainable exploitation of fish resources.

3. Overview of Five Case **Study Countries**

We applied the questions discussed for the countries listed here for case studies. These countries were chosen because relevant dialogue had been initiated to strengthen synergies and coordination between SPJ and fisheries management. Based on consultations in 2021, the five countries identified were: Costa Rica from America and the Caribbean, **Kenya f**rom Africa, Solomon Islands from the Pacific, Sri Lanka from South Asia, and Viet Nam from East Asia.

The short overview of the country case studies here provides brief information on the focus, context, methods, and general findings of each case study. Mindful of the constraints with the available data and information⁷, all case studies aimed to interpret results obtained and carefully present the findings, putting them into the respective contexts, while identifying next steps to address existing gaps and challenges.

Costa Rica: "Exploring alternatives for economic inclusion of low-income artisanal fisher communities".

- The Costa Rica case study aimed understand the socioeconomic livelihoods conditions of low-income, artisanal fishing and mollusk-gathering communities, and (ii) identify avenues to improve their social and economic inclusion in activities linked to, or outside of, fishing.
- The country's economic growth has not been shared with many fisheries communities which face a variety of challenges. Although Costa Rica has reached upper middle-income country status and has enjoyed sustained economic growth over the past decade, fishing communities have been left behind. These communities also face increasing climate risks, as well as short-term

challenges resulting from government measures to protect the marine ecosystem and improve fishing sustainability.

- To profile small-scale fisheries communities, the World Bank, relevant ministries, and local academia⁸ collaborated to develop pilot questionnaire and conduct household interviews and semi-structured **interviews** with business and other potential employers in the two municipalities to diagnose current and future labor demand, including potential job opportunities for lowincome fisheries workers. The case study also built upon a pilot in two regions with different characteristics: a rural coastal community and a coastal tourist resort.
- The study shows how SPJ programs can help support marginalized fisheriessector actors as they attempt to leave their livelihoods in dwindling, overexploited **fisheries for other jobs**. There is a clear need to support low-income, small-scale (artisanal) fisheries households, especially when they do not qualify for social assistance, but the

All case studies are based on the limited data and information on the fisheries sector or population available, reflecting the frontier nature of this task. For example, sources for quantitative data varied from official and nationally representative household surveys, as in Kenya and Vietnam, to other surveys (for example, National Agricultural Survey), as with Solomon Islands, and small-scale primary data collection, as in Costa Rica and Sri Lanka. Even when using household surveys, the most rigorous data source, the sampling framework is not always stratified by sector of employment, resulting in a small sample of fisheries households.

The work was also informed by previous work undertaken by the line ministry in charge of fisheries with support from local academic institutions.

The questionnaire took input from the pilot "Fishing and Aquaculture Registry", the social registry (SINIRUBE), and the official household surveys (ENAHO).

country's social-protection system is not well coordinated with the fisheries sector; the ministry in charge of fisheries does not use the country's main social registry to inform its policies or beneficiary targeting, for instance. The activity informed potential actions to promote economic inclusion of low-income fisheries workers and their communities.

Kenya: "Supporting sustainability in Kenya's fisheries through social protection and labor-market interventions".

- The Kenya case study analyzed fishing and aquaculture households to identify opportunities for creating new and better jobs for the country's fisheries sector.
- Despite robust economic growth during the 2010s, Kenya's progress has slowed due to recent global upheaval, and coastal areas continue to stand out as the least developed in the country. Although endowed with valuable coastal and freshwater resources, over 62 percent of Kenyans in coastal counties live below the poverty line, and fishing communities in marine coastal areas have fallen into poverty during a period of economic growth. In response, the Government of Kenya (GoK) prioritized the "Blue Economy" as a key component of its Vision 2030 development agenda, identifying fisheries among the key sectors that can contribute to achieving the vision. A key reason for choosing Kenya for

this case study was because of GoK initiatives to conserve aquatic living resources and tackle climate change, with World Bank engagement supporting both sectors.

- The case study examines the socioeconomic and labor-market status of fishing and aquaculture workers. Analysis is based on the country's official statistics, namely the 2019 Kenya Continuous Household Survey (KCHS) and the 2015/16 Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey (KIHBS).
- The case study highlights how combining SPJ and fisheries-management programs can help support lagging communities, especially the poorest and most vulnerable **fishing households**, to cope with short-term income threats resulting from government measures to improve fisheries management. The case study includes an exploration of how to improve social-protection systems and leverage active labor-market programs to create new and better jobs, while assisting fisheries households to comply with fisheriesmanagement regulations.

Solomon Islands: "Opportunities for linking fisheries management and social protection"

The case study delves into the potential of leveraging community-based resource management (CBRM) to integrate SPJ-related interventions into fisheries management.

- Coastal resources sustain a large share of the Solomon Island population, but the country faces the second-highest risks of disasters in the world and has limited capacity to cope. Solomon Islands, a small Pacific Island country (PIC)—one of the world's least developed—is also home to one of the world's most diverse coastal ecosystems. Coastal resources provide both nutrition and income to a wide swath of the population, with about 60 percent of Solomon Islanders involved in fishing activities, for own consumption or for sale.
- The analysis approach entailed a literature review, three surveys¹⁰, key-informant interviews, and stakeholder workshops, in partnership with two Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) centers—WorldFish and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).
- The study presents opportunities for combining CBRM and SPJ interventions to improve sustainability of renewable natural-resource use and livelihoods. Formal social-protection mechanisms to help people manage risks are almost non-existent in the country, and the Government has focused on CBRM as its primary strategy for coastal fisheries management, building on indigenous

conservation traditions and community rights. The study focuses on how fisheries-management decentralization through "bottom-up" initiatives can help local indigenous fishing communities lead fisheries management in coastal areas. Potential measures to integrate SPJ into CRBM include interventions related to financial inclusion, climate-change adaptation, disasterrisk management, and other complementary services to reduce vulnerability and expand SPJ coverage.

Sri Lanka: "Integrating social protection and economic inclusion with costal fisheries management".

- The Sri Lanka case study aims to explore how SPJ policies and programs could help rebuild and maintain sustainable coastal fisheries, with a focus on the high-export-value spiny lobster species.
- Sri Lanka is currently experiencing economic crisis, with fisheries households among those most under threat for food insecurity. Even before the global economic crisis, fish-stock productivity in Sri Lanka—a lower-middle-income island country in the Indian Ocean—had been declining, failing to meet domestic demand

^{10 (}i) National Agricultural Survey 2017 covering 4,224 households; (ii) High-Frequency Phone Surveys conducted in 2020, 2021, and 2022 covering 8,055 households; and (iii) World Fish panel survey from 2016 and 2018 to understand coastal livelihood in relation to CBRM (1 village, n=285 respondents). Recent World Bank analysis of the Solomon Islands 2019 Population and Housing Census has also been incorporated into the case study brief.

despite coastal fisheries being a critical source of livelihood. Efforts are underway to carry out stock assessments and develop fisheriesmanagement plans (FMPs), but these will impose costs on fisheries workers.

- The case study consists of two key parts. One is a literature review, and the other is a descriptive, comparative multivariate statistical analysis of socioeconomic and demographic characteristics and aspirations of coastal households, using the data collected from 500 households (non-representative)¹¹. The study also draws information from other sources, including a stock assessment of spiny-lobster resources, an institutional and regulatory assessment, a value-chain analysis, and semistructured consultations with coastal fishers and fishery inspectors.
- The case study highlights the potential to strengthen coastal fisheries management accompanying interventions designed and delivered strategically to complement monitoring and enforcement of fisheries regulations. This comes at a time when reforms are under way to make the country's extensive but fragmented SPJ systems more adaptive and coherent with other sectors, including fisheries.

Viet Nam: "Connecting social protection, labor-market interventions. and fisheries management".

- The case assesses socioeconomic vulnerability to determine how to leverage and adapt SPJ interventions to support sustainable fishing along with household resilience to poverty and climate risks.
- Fish-stock productivity in lower middleincome Viet Nam-a top-producer and the third largest exporter of fish products globally (FAO 2022)—is in decline. Ineffective management of both small-scale inshore and larger-scale offshore fisheries has led to a large increase in fishing, leading to overexploitation.
- The case study creates a socioeconomic and demographic profile of the country's fisheries sector and assesses the social and economic vulnerability of fisheries households and workers. It uses nationallyrepresentative data from the 2020 Viet Nam Household Living Standard Survey (VHLSS) and the 2020 Labor Force Survey (LFS).

¹¹ This survey was conducted to inform a bioeconomic modeling and local economy-wide impact evaluation (Bio-LEWIE) model, which was used to examine long-term biophysical and economic outcomes under various fisheries-management scenarios (World Bank, forthcoming). No official or other existing survey data was available to provide a profile of Sri Lanka's coastal fishing households: the Household Income and Expenditure survey is representative at the district level, but the number of households whose main income source is fisheries is too small to allow statistical analysis.

The case study shows how SPJ can play a crucial role in supporting government efforts to address fish-stock decline. including planned decommissioning of thousands of vessels. Viet Nam's SPJ systems have evolved since the 1990s, but programs remain small and fragmented, even compared with peer countries. Several SPJ programs specifically for the fisheries sector focus on increasing productive capacity, but not on fisheries management and mitigating harm from natural disasters, and implementation of these programs remains limited due to challenges with initial registration processes.

4. Key points

After presenting the potential vet concrete with opportunities to connect SPJ fisheries management for a more integrated approach, each case study concludes with key messages, some of which are summarized below for illustrative purposes.

vulnerabilities **Increasing** and risks in the fisheries sector affect both fisheries communities and wider society. Coastal nations are the immediate beneficiaries and the ultimate custodian of their marine resources, but not managing fisheries stock productivity with a long-term vision threatens not only fisheries households and communities but also entire countries and, eventually, affecting food and

nutrition security for a broad population. Shifting thinking to comprehend the need for more investment in fisheries management represents a starting point to initiate dialogue for the creation of more coherent and coordinated approaches to strengthen fisheries for sustainability.

Social protection and jobs (SPJ) can support fisheries policy and subsidy reforms for sustainable fisheries management. Fisheriesmanagement measures—such as regulations to close fishing during specific periods, for example exist to promote long-term productivity of fishery stocks and fisheries. While many of these rules would benefit these communities, and beyond, in the longer-term, complying with them may cause significant short-term harm to fisheries workers and communities, which makes it difficult for them to comply. Well-designed and -implemented SPJ programs and mechanisms can promote equity and compensate for regulatorily-incurred costs or support alternative livelihood opportunities, helping countries to overcome these obstacles to long-term fisheries sustainability.

To design management measures sustainable fisheries, risks to the fisheries sector and specific groups need to be **understood in context.** Different contexts fish-stock status and trends and the people dependent on the fisheries, for example require different approaches. Depending on policy objectives, interventions need to target

different groups.¹² A community approach might be preferable to selecting certain segments of the population, for instance. Perhaps small-scale fishers are poor, but sometimes this is not the case. At times, those who are engaged in unsustainable fishing activities may not necessarily be the poorest. Men tend to dominate the fishing industry, while more women are engaged in activities before and after fishing to support the value chain. These considerations must be carefully evaluated before designing the interventions.

While data to fill information and knowledge gaps are limited, existing data is good enough to start dialogue and initial efforts in understanding risks and needs in the fisheries **sector**. For example, national surveys such as livingstandard measurement surveys and labor-force surveys usually include questions related to fishing activities. Even if the scope of the analysis is limited due to sample frameworks and questions, these data are sufficient to conduct preliminary analysis on fisheries workers and households.

Similarly, existing SPJ and fisheries systems, measures, and programs represent starting points, even though investments are needed for deliberate and specific adjustments. For example, social and fisheries registries, which may currently have limited population coverage and information, can be expanded and integrated to complement each other. Carrying out tailored intake and/or outreach to register additional fisheries workers through local fisheries associations could be undertaken. Furthermore, adjustments are needed to align benefits with regulations—for example, through providing public works during a closed season—and cross-subsidy social-insurance mechanisms can be implemented to accommodate low and irregular income of fisheries actors.

Current resources for managing fisheries for sustainability are inadequate, but there are underexplored financing opportunities. The majority of existing fisheries subsidies are regressive and harmful, but also represent an opportunity to create fiscal space to repurpose public investment to achieve more sustainable fisheries. In addition, innovative financing mechanisms such as Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) can attract private capital. Eventually, under appropriate fisheries management, the harvesting of marine resources should be able to fund fisheries-management programs—such as stock assessments, control, monitoring and surveillance operations, among others—as well as contribute to financing socialprotection programs, such as retirement and job-inclusion programs.

¹² In some instances, a fishery is accessed by fishers coming from further afield, adding additional complexities to targeting.

5. Advancing the fisheries and SPJ agenda

Building upon the findings and lessons learned from these case studies, the next steps focus on continuing the dialogue to continuously and progressively advance this agenda in the respective countries. To move forward the discussion on findings and recommendations from the case studies, a series of consultations are planned with key country ministries—both from the fisheries and SPJ sides as well as with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, with the objective of agreeing on priority actions.

Some concrete steps are already being taken in some countries. For example, an in-depth discussion in one country focuses on how to adapt identified SPJ programs to address the specific needs of the fisheries sector; one proposed possible next step includes the design of economic-inclusion interventions to be piloted in selected fisheries communities. Also, new adapted household surveys are underway in some countries to more rigorously understand fisheries actors and their communities. The surveys will focus more on the poor and on women to inform the design of SPJ interventions to support populations relying on living aquatic resources.

In parallel with continued support case-study countries, the World Bank team is developing a concise "handbook" to share key basic knowledge and practical information.

The handbook, due for release in summer 2024, will focus on how country practitioners working in, or with, ministries in charge of fisheries and SPJ can start integrating SPJ and fisheries management to promote sustainable fisheries sectors.

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Integrating Social Protection and Jobs with Fisheries Management

Conceptual Framework (May 2022)

Country Case Studies (June 2024)

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- Viet Nam: Connecting social protection, labor market interventions and fisheries management







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